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**TWO ADDITIONAL BAKERSFIELD RESIDENTS SENTENCED IN
FRAUD CONNECTED WITH FUNDS INTENDED FOR VICTIMS OF HURRICANE
KATRINA**

FRESNO- United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that DAVID ROBERT CANDELARIA, 37, HAROLD DENNIS OATS, 26, both of Bakersfield, were sentenced to 18 and 10 months in federal prison, respectively, and ordered to pay \$12,520 for their acts associated with a wire fraud scheme to defraud the American Red Cross and Western Union of funds intended for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

This case is the result of an extensive investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Stanley A. Boone, who prosecuted the case, defendant CANDELARIA worked at the American Red Cross Call Center and processed numerous fraudulent claims on behalf of himself and others, including co-defendant OATS. OATS recruited other individuals to pick up at the claims at various Western Union locations in the Bakersfield area. Both defendants received sentencing enhancements for their respective leadership roles. Defendant CANDELARIA received an additional sentencing enhancement for abusing of his position of trust while employed at the Red Cross Call Center.

United States Attorney Scott commented that investigations are continuing and more arrests are anticipated. According to Scott, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal crimes such as charity fraud, identity theft, and insurance fraud. The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force -- chaired by Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division -- includes members from the FBI, the Postal Inspection Service, the Executive Office of the United States Attorneys, and the Federal Trade Commission, among others. The Eastern District of California first charged defendants associated with Katrina fraud related cases in October 2005.

Since October 2005, 72 defendants have been charged with defrauding the American Red Cross of money resulting from the operation of a Red Cross Call Center located in Bakersfield, California; 60 of those defendants have pled guilty, all to felonies and 29 have been sentenced so far.